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SUPER POWERS™

IN FINAL COMBAT WITH DARKSEID™ BY JACK KIRBY

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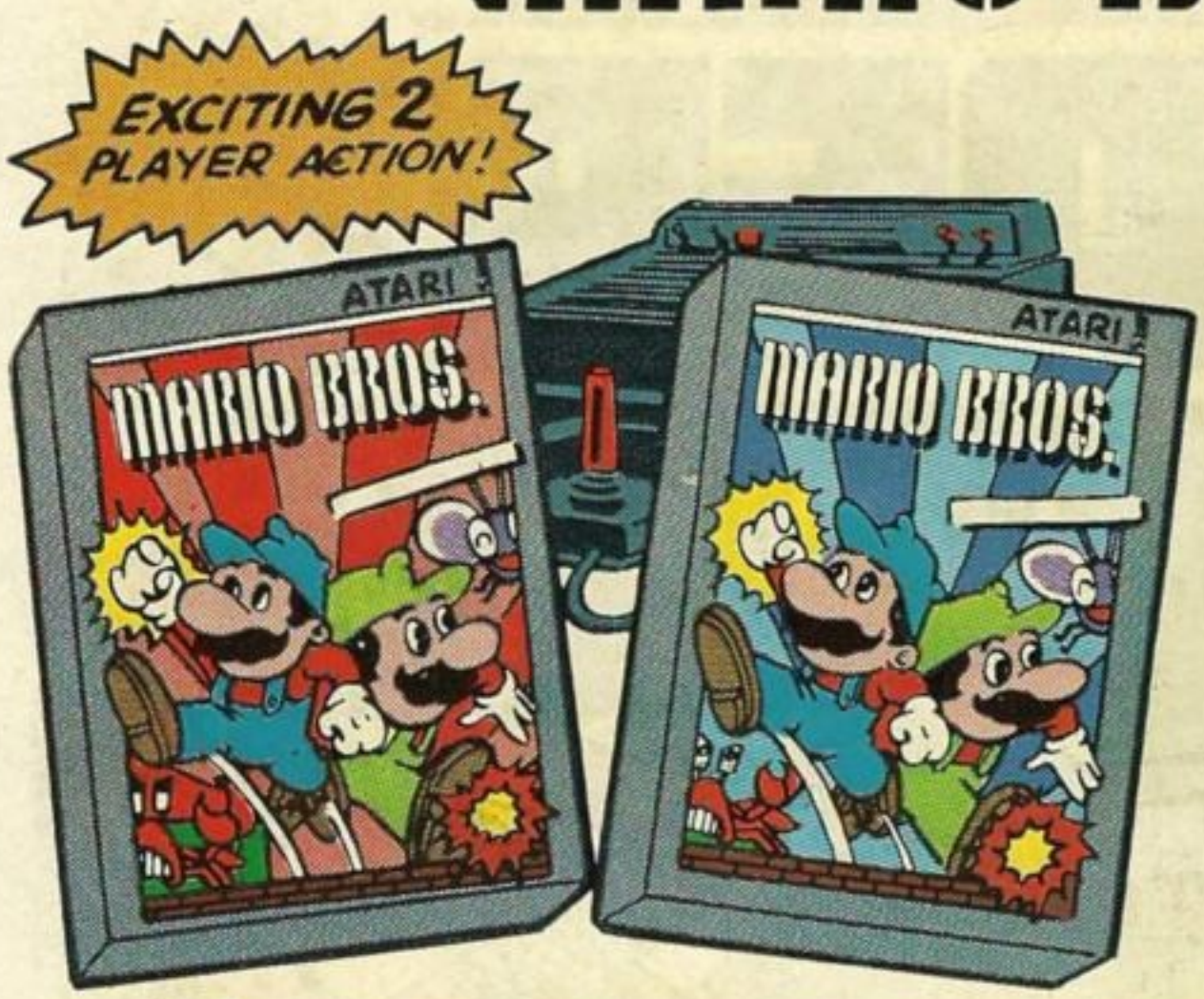

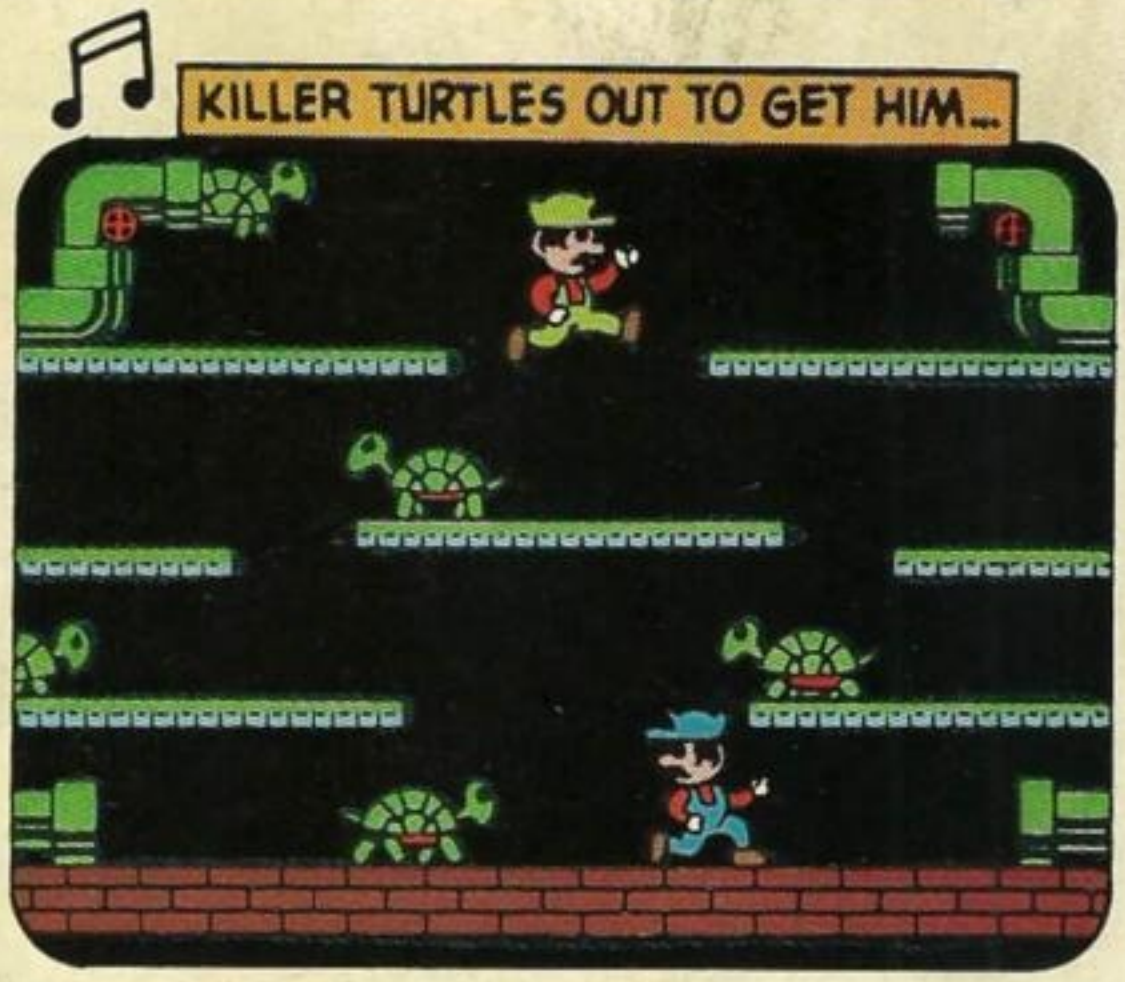

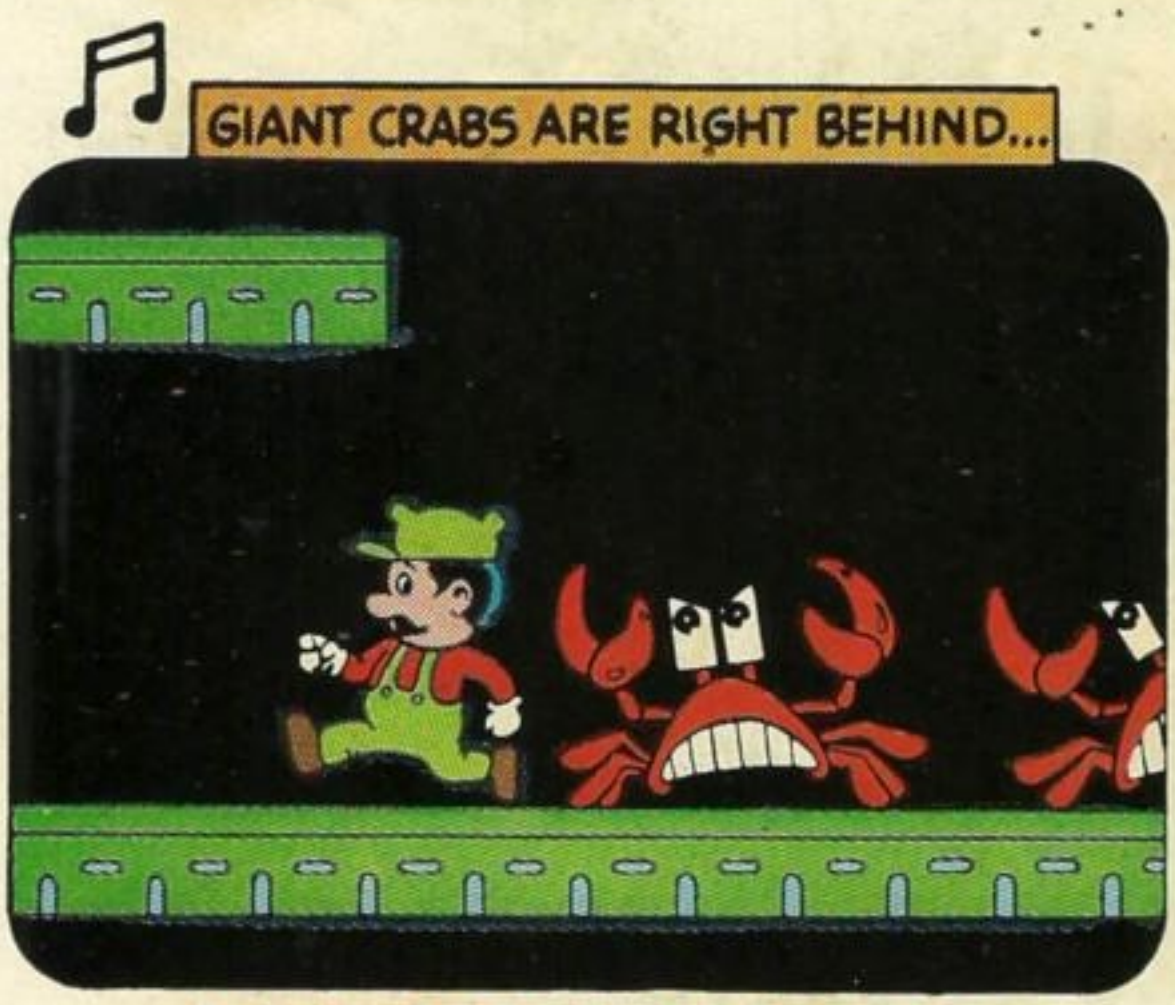

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GREAT KRYPTON! THAT--MACHINE--IT JUST POPPED OUT OF NOWHERE! WHAT IS IT?

DON'T ASK ME, SUPERMAN-- I'VE NEVER BEEN ON APOKOLIPS BEFORE!

WHATEVER IT IS, IT'S VIBRATING--SHIMMERING --AS IF IT WERE ALIVE!

BAZZZIIIZZZ!

MOMENTS AGO, THE GREATEST HEROES AND VILLAINS OF EARTH FOUND THEMSELVES STRANDED ON THE WAR-TORN, OTHER-DIMENSIONAL WORLD CALLED APOKOLIPS.

THEIR CAPTORS, LED BY DARKSEID, LORD OF EVIL, JOURNEYED TO EARTH, THERE TO BEGIN A CAMPAIGN OF UNOBSTRUCTED CONQUEST.

FOR POSSIBLY THE FIRST TIME, NOT ALL THEIR

SUPER POWERS™

CAN SAVE THEM -- BUT WHAT ABOUT THIS MYSTERIOUS DEVICE?

W-WHAT CAN IT BE?

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MY SUPER-HEARING IS PICKING UP A DISTINCT PATTERN OF ULTRA-HIGH FREQUENCY VIBRATIONS EMANATING FROM IT -- PERHAPS IT'S A COMMUNICATION DEVICE --

IT'S PROBABLY RELAYING A MESSAGE TO *DARKSEID* ON EARTH -- LIKE SOME KIND OF COSMIC *BABY-SITTER*, WATCHING OUR EVERY MOVE!

WELL, I VALUE *MY* PRIVACY -- EVEN ON *THIS* GOD-FORSAKEN WORLD! IT'S TIME WE MADE CONTACT --

NO, *FLASH!* DON'T *TOUCH* IT! IT MIGHT BE --

TZWOFF!!

GREAT HERA! THAT MACHINE JUST PLUCKED US UP AND DROPPED US *HERE!*

SO MUCH FOR THE NOTION OF IT BEING A COMMUNICATION DEVICE -- *TRANSPORTER* IS MORE LIKE IT! BUT WHERE ARE WE?

IT'S SOME KIND OF INTERMEDIARY DIMENSION -- A COSMIC *STOPOVER* BEFORE WE REACH OUR *FINAL* DESTINATION!

RAO ONLY KNOWS WHERE AND WHAT *THAT* WILL BE -- BUT HANG ON -- I FEEL ANOTHER *ENERGY SURGE* COMING!

ZZAAK!!

WALLS ALL AROUND US-- IS THIS A *PRISON?*

AFTER ALL WE'VE BEEN THROUGH, PRISON WOULD BE A *BLESSING!*

FOR ONCE, JOKER, I *AGREE* WITH YOU! BUT WHILE WE'RE HERE--

HAWKMAN! WHAT DO YOU SEE UP THERE?

YOU'D *NEVER* BELIEVE IT!

SUPERMAN! YOU'D BETTER FLY UP AND SEE FOR YOURSELF!

IT *IS* INCREDIBLE! WE'VE LANDED INSIDE AN IMMENSE *GOBLET!*

BUT THAT'S ONLY THE BEGINNING-- TAKE A LOOK!

SPACESHIP

WE'RE ALL ON IT!

EARTH!

I'VE SEEN COUNTLESS WORLDS-- BOTH ALIVE *AND* DEAD--IN MY TRAVELS, BUT I'VE NEVER WITNESSED *ANYTHING* LIKE *THIS!*

LOOKS LIKE SOMEBODY ONCE GAVE A PARTY -- AND *DEATH* ARRIVED!

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MEANWHILE, INSIDE THE ENORMOUS GOBLET...

WELL? WHAT ARE YOUR BEADY LITTLE EYES PERUSING, O' KING OF COMEDY?

LOOKS LIKE STERLING SILVER TO ME, PENGUIN-- BUT IF YOU WERE A BIT *TALLER* I MIGHT EVEN BE ABLE TO SEE *OVER* THE RIM OF THIS GIANT-SIZED BATHTUB!

SUDDENLY--

WHOOOMP!!

I CAN'T TAKE MUCH MORE OF THIS, JOKER, OLD BUDDY.

I KNOW WHAT YOU MEAN! PERSONALLY, *I'D* PREFER AN *OCEAN* CRUISE!

IT'S HAPPENED *AGAIN!* AND EACH WORLD WE LAND ON IS *MORE* BIZARRE THAN THE *LAST!* WILL THIS MADNESS *EVER* END?

6

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AT THAT MOMENT -- ON THE PLANET EARTH!

POW!

NO, SIRE, NO!

FOOLS! IDIOTS!

SMASH!

KRAK!

IS THIS STILLBORN GAGGLE OF MUTES ALL THAT MY STRATEGY HAS SPAWNED?

SIRE...

I FEAR THE FAULT LIES WITH YOUR *EMISSARIES*-- AND NOT --

WHERE ARE YOUR FELLOW EMISSARIES? *WHERE ARE MY ARMIES OF CONQUEST?*

WHY ISN'T THE EARTH AFLAME?

I DON'T HEAR THE PLEAS FOR MERCY!

WHERE ARE THE CRIES OF SURRENDER?

OUR ARMIES STAND *READY* FOR ACTION, SIRE! HOWEVER, IT WAS DECIDED AMONG US TO *MOVE* ON *YOUR* ORDER!

I'M *TOUCHED* BY THIS GESTURE OF DEVOTION.

CEREMONY *FOLLOWS* VICTORY! *IT NEVER PRECEDES IT!!*

BUT THE OUTCOME IS *CERTAIN*, SIRE! WE ARE POISED IN THE *FOUR* CORNERS OF THIS GLOBE!

WE'VE SET UP A BASE OF OPERATIONS HERE, ON THE TOP FLOOR OF A SKYSCRAPER NEAREST THE ENTRY POINT OF THE *BOOM TUBE!*

IF YOU WISH, SIRE, YOU MAY TRAVEL TO THE ROOF TO WATCH *FURTHER* TROOPS AS THEY ARRIVE!

FOOL! I HAVE NO DESIRE TO REVIEW WHAT I HAVE SEEN COUNTLESS TIMES BEFORE! RATHER, I WOULD EXAMINE WHAT IS TO COME!

SINCE THE CLASH OF ARMS HAS BEEN *DELAYED*, I'VE DECIDED TO GO *DOWN* AND *ENJOY* THIS DAY IN THE CITY...

...SINCE IT WILL SOON BE *MINE!*

ON A LOWER FLOOR--

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IT'S IN *YOUR* BALL PARK, SHMIDLAPP! WE NEED THAT INKING IN *TWO* WEEKS!

Y'GOT IT! Y'GOT IT!

Y'GOT TWO *MINUTES*, SHMIDLAPP!-- *TWO SECONDS--!*

MOVE IT, SHMIDLAPP! DO IT, SHMIDLAPP!

CHEEZ! IF I WAS A *LITTLE* OVERDUE--

Y'D THINK THE WORLD-- WAS GOING-- DOWN-- THE-- TUBES-- GULP!

MEANWHILE, NO LESS THAN 5 DIMENSIONS AWAY...

WHOEVER IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THESE ENDLESS HUMILIATIONS WILL SOON HAVE TO *ANSWER* TO ME!

SPLOK!

LOOKS LIKE YOU'RE GOING TO GET THE CHANCE TO *ASK* YOUR QUESTIONS, LUTHOR--LOOK UP AHEAD! I'M BETTING THIS IS OUR *LAST STOP!*

AND THIS MUST BE OUR *HOST*-- BUT *WHO* IS HE, AND *HOW* AND *WHY* HAS HE BROUGHT US HERE?

I SHALL TAKE YOUR QUESTIONS IN TURN, SON OF KRYPTON.

YOU HAVE BEEN BROUGHT TO ME BY MY *WORLOGOG*, WHICH IS A PHYSICAL MANIFESTATION OF TIME AND SPACE ITSELF!

TIME AND SPACE... EVER IN CONSTANT MOTION... *THEY* CREATE THE EFFECTS YOU HAVE JUST EXPERIENCED, AND *THEY* SUBJECT US *ALL* TO SURPRISES AND INDIGNITIES...

THE *WORLOGOG* POSSESSES THE POWER TO ACCELERATE OR SUSPEND *BOTH* TIME *AND* SPACE... *IF* YOU ARE ITS *MASTER*.

I BUILT IT-- I *CONTROL* IT!

BUT WHY SUBJECT *US* TO THAT MAD, DEPRESSING JOURNEY TO THE OTHER WORLDS?

CALL IT CAUTION -- AN ATTEMPT TO CONSTRUCT AN UNFOLLOWABLE TRAIL ACROSS THE COSMOS--

--FOR IF *DARKSEID* WERE TO LEARN OF THE DESTINY I HAVE PREPARED FOR YOU, MY PLAN MIGHT WELL FAIL.

DESTINY? PLAN? I'M NOT SURE I--

PLANETS ARE *SPACESHIPS* ALL-- ORBITING THEIR SUNS WITH CARGOS OF TEEMING, SELF-DESTRUCTIVE *LIFE!*

THE *LEADERS* EVER DIE WITH THE *FOLLOWERS!* THE *RICH* VANISH WITH THE *POOR!*

Y'KNOW, BATS-- THIS JOKER *STILL* HASN'T TOLD US WHO HE *IS!!*

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MY NAME IS *METRON*, AND I AM IN WEARY PURSUIT OF THE ULTIMATE KNOWLEDGE--AN ALL-ENCOMPASSING WISDOM THAT MY RACE REFERS TO AS "*THE SOURCE.*"

IT IS IRONIC THAT IN MASTERING THE UNFATHOMABLY *COMPLEX* DURING MY VOYAGES, I SHOULD ARRIVE *HERE*, TO DEAL WITH THE INCREDIBLY *SIMPLE!*

WELL, THAT JUST ABOUT ANSWERS *MY* QUESTION!

HE--HE SEEMS SO NOBLE-- SO SINCERE -- FOR THE FIRST TIME IN HOURS, I FEEL LIKE THE EARTH HAS A CHANCE TO SURVIVE!

I'M AFRAID I'M NOT CONVINCED, WONDER WOMAN. SINCERITY ALONE WON'T DEFEAT DARKSEID'S ARMIES!

WE SHALL DO THIS BECAUSE WE DARE! WE SHALL DO THIS BECAUSE WE CAN! WE SHALL DO THIS TOGETHER!

METRON'S BODY SUDDENLY GENERATES A UNIQUE ELECTRICAL FORCE WHICH LEAPS ACROSS THE GALAXIES!

SPAAK!

WHEN IT REACHES THE CORRECT PLANETARY SYSTEM, IT PENETRATES THE JLA SATELLITE!

ZAK!

ALRIGHHHHT!! I'VE PICKED UP SOME GREAT ROCK VIDEOS FROM EARTH!

ZZK

TZAK!

WHO'S MINDING THE SATELLITE, FELLA?

BATMAN! B-B-BUT HOW--? W-W-WHERE--?

AND SOON...

I STILL DON'T LIKE THE IDEA OF TEAMING UP WITH THOSE TWO GUYS!

THE FEELING'S MUTUAL, BRAT!

QUIET!-- BOTH OF YOU! THIS IS BIGGER THAN ANY OF OUR PETTY DIFFERENCES!

CORRECT, HAWKMAN. AND WITH THE WORLOGOS IN PLACE, ALL OF US ARE NOW LIVING COMPONENTS OF A BRAIN BOOSTER!

WE ARE NOW, IN EFFECT, A MOST POWERFUL UNIT OF "MENTAL ARTILLERY"! AT MY COMMAND YOU WILL TRANSFER YOUR UNUSUAL ABILITIES TO THE WORLOGOS!

UNDER MY CONTROL WE SHALL SPAN A THOUSAND GALAXIES!-- AND PLAY HAVOC WITH VAST ARMIES OF DARKSEID'S FINEST KILLERS!

I'VE ARRANGED ALL THIS TO BLOCK A DRIVING EGO THAT WOULD SEIZE YOUR PLANET -- AND EXPAND TO THE COSMOS!

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THE SURVIVOR GETS THE EARTH!

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SUPERMAN

GRAVITY'S GONE HAYWIRE! HOW CAN I POSSIBLY SAVE ALL THESE

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WHERE LEGENDS LIVE.

-- AND, ACROSS THE FIELD OF LIGHT-YEARS -- ON THE PLANET EARTH...

GREAT DARKSEID! I'VE BEEN ORDERED TO *APPEAL* TO YOUR VALUED MERCY!

OUR *AUTOMATED COMMAND POST* FUNCTIONS AT --

POW!

-- AT FULL --

KROMP!

-- EFFI -- UGH --!

ARRRGH..

COUGH! COUGH! COUGH!

-- MOST -- HALLOWED -- MAJESTY! -- YOU *MUST* -- -- UNDERSTAND ---!

WE'RE AT A MINUTE *PAST* ZERO!

SPEAK INTO THIS MECHANISM, SIRE! YOUR COMMAND WILL BE RECEIVED BY *EACH* OF YOUR ARMIES!!

--READY, SIRE?--

YOU CAN BET YOUR BLOODIED CARCASS, I'M READY!

NOW, TREMBLE, EARTH!--AND FEEL MY BOOT!!

ALL FORCES--THE TIME IS RIPE--TO ATTAACCK.!!!

WITH A DEAFENING ROAR, DARKSEID'S ARMIES FAN OUT FROM WITHIN AND AROUND THE IMMENSE BOOM TUBE WITH A MURDEROUS FURY!

BOOM

COMBAT UNITS!--PRESS FORWARD!!

THE OBJECTIVE OF THIS ARMY IS TO STRIKE AT METROPOLIS AND SWARM BEYOND IT--ULTIMATELY, TO JOIN WITH ITS THREE OTHER COUNTERPARTS AFTER CUTTING A TRAIL OF DESTRUCTION ACROSS THE CONTINENT!

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OF COURSE, THE COMPUTER CITY OF METROPOLIS IS DEEPLY PERTURBED BY THIS DISPLAY OF MASS VIOLENCE IN THE YEAR 80,000 A.D. AFTER UNTOLD MELLENNIA OF UNINTERRUPTED PEACE, IT IS EMBARRASSING TO CALL AN ASSAULT MONITOR INTO SERVICE ONCE AGAIN.

PLEASE CLEAR ALL THOROUGHFARES--

--ADMONISHMENT AND DISPOSAL OF MILITARISTIC TRANSGRESSORS CAN BE HARMFUL TO ONLOOKERS.

THE VESTIGES OF LUTHOR'S POWER OF TIME DISTORTION, SUMMONED UP BY METRON'S BRAIN BOOSTER AND MAGNIFIED TO THE MILLIONTH DEGREE, HAS NOT ONLY PROPELLED DARKSEID'S ARMY INTO A FUTURE CENTURY, BUT NOW FORCES THEM TO CONFRONT A MECHANIZED CREATURE POSSESSING STRENGTH WHICH EASILY SURPASSES THAT OF SUPERMAN!

PEYOOOWW!

DEATH RAYS! SPACE EXPLOSIVES! INTERDIMENSIONAL ATTACK!

THIS IS DEPLORABLE!

WE WILL INITIATE STEPS TO END IT!

PROCEDURE ONE: THE SOURCE OF THE DISTURBANCE IS LOCATED... DARKSEID'S ARMY IS STILL POURING OUT OF ITS GIANT BOOM TUBE WHEN THE ASSAULT MONITOR'S RAY LASHES OUT--

-- SEALING OFF THE DIMENSIONAL BRIDGE AND ITS REMAINING CONTENTS FROM THE FUTURE CENTURY!

PROCEDURE TWO: ALL LOOSE ELEMENTS ARE GATHERED INTO ONE COMPACT UNIT!

PROCEDURE THREE: THE COMPRESSED MASS IS HURLED INTO SPACE LIKE TOXIC WASTE--

-- WHERE A PASSING ASTEROID ATTRACTS THE DRIFTING MASS AND CARRIES IT OFF! DARKSEID'S FIRST FORCE HAS SUFFERED AN IGNOBLE DEFEAT!

THE SECOND ARMY SUFFERS A FATE AS HUMILIATING AND DEADLY AS THE FIRST! IT BURSTS FROM A BOOM TUBE MYSTERIOUSLY RELOCATED TO ANCIENT ASIA -- BUT ITS SAVAGE WARRIORS HAVE BEEN BIZARRELY TRANSFORMED!

THE DATE IS 60,000 B.C. -- AND THE POWER OF GENETIC REGRESSION, ONCE CRAFTILY GRANTED TO BRAINIAC BY DARKSEID'S EMISSARY, HAS BEEN TURNED AGAINST THE COMBATIVE SWARM BY METRON'S TIME-AND-SPACE SPANNING WORLOGOG!

REDUCED TO PURE NAKED SAVAGERY, NO LONGER ABLE TO EVEN REMEMBER ITS MISSION, THE SECOND ARMY LITERALLY ANNIHILATES ITSELF!!

YET, EVEN AS THE SECOND ARMY SUCCUMBS TO ITS OWN BRUTAL GENETIC BIRTHRIGHT, THE WILL OF AQUAMAN, BOOSTED BY METRON'S TOOLS, DOOMS DARKSEID'S THIRD ARMY, SUBMERGING IT BENEATH THE MURKY WATERS NEAR ANCIENT ATLANTIS!

AND BACK IN METROPOLIS, DARKSEID HIMSELF IS WATCHING! A TIME-SPANNING VISI-RECEIVER HAS ALREADY SHOWN HIM THE GRIM EVENTS!

THERE'S NO NEED TO FOLLOW THE PROGRESS OF OUR FOURTH ARMY -- WE'VE ALREADY BEEN OUTWITTED!

NO! NO! NOOO!!!

SIRE! THE FOURTH ARMY! IT TOO HAS JUST BEEN-- DESTROYED!

THE ENTIRE ATTACK FORCE WAS TRANSPORTED TO A PSYCHOACTIVE DIMENSION -- TO SPEND AN ETERNITY IN A MAD UNIVERSE!

WE HAVE BEEN MET AND BEATEN BY AN UNCANNILY SUPERIOR MIND!

DO NOT CONCERN YOURSELF WITH THE FINAL DISPOSITION OF THAT CONFLICT--

--FOR NOW, MY ABLE EMISSARIES, YOU MUST DEAL WITH YET ANOTHER SAD AFFAIR!

WE'RE OFF TO APOKOLIPS -- TO ATTEND YOUR COURT-MARTIAL!

AT THAT MOMENT, IN A SMALL, UNNOTICED CORNER OF APOKOLIPS...

THUS IT ENDS!

AS DARKSEID SOUGHT HIS VICTORY ON EARTH -- WE'VE WON IT HERE!

STILL, THIS TRAGEDY *COULD* HAVE BEEN *AVOIDED* -- WERE *DARKSEID* AND *MYSELF* TO SIMPLY CEASE *TO EXIST!*

IT SEEMS THAT WE WHO NOW CLASH FOR *POWER* OFFER *POOR* ROLE MODELS FOR THOSE WHO MAY ONE DAY FIND A COMPARABLE STRENGTH WITHIN *THEMSELVES!*

BUT, CHANGE IS BOUND TO COME -- AND ONE DAY YOU SHALL SEE THE BIRTH OF A *NEW THOUGHT* -- A *NEW* ROAD TO AGES ALIVE WITH *HAPPIER* CHOICES!

WOULD YOU *DESTROY* YOURSELF TO ACHIEVE THAT?

MY DISAPPEARANCE *ALONE* WOULD NOT USHER IN THIS NEW AGE -- THERE IS *ANOTHER* WHO WOULD *NEVER* WILLINGLY FORSAKE HIS PATH OF *DESTRUCTION* -- AND EVEN *I* LACK THE *POWER* TO COUNTER *HIS* WILL!

SO, LIKE *DARKSEID*, I SHALL CONTINUE TO DO WHAT OUR SORT HAS *ALWAYS* DONE...

BUT WHEN THIS NEW AND BENEFICIAL *INNOVATION* ARISES TO ELIMINATE OUR NEEDLESS CLASHES --

--YES! I WOULD *WILLINGLY* -- *VANISH!*

WHAT?! A *KISS* FOR METRON? I--I NEVER THOUGH IT LIKELY--

YOU DESERVE IT -- FOR SAVING OUR WORLD, AND SHOWING US THAT EVEN A *GOD* CAN BE *HUMAN!*

UH -- I HATE TO INTERRUPT YOU, WONDER WOMAN -- BUT DO YOU THINK YOU COULD ASK METRON HOW WE'RE GOING TO GET *HOME?*

AFTER ALL, I THINK WE'RE FINISHED HERE, AND--

THE *BRAIN BOOSTER* -- IT JUST *DISAPPEARED!*

BATMAN -- LOOK UP IN THE SKY -- IS *THAT* OUR RIDE HOME?

FOOOOMM!

YOU ASSUME *CORRECTLY*, JOKER--

--AND SINCE THIS *DAY'S* WORK IS *DONE*, YOU SHALL *ALL* LEAVE HERE TOGETHER--AS *BIRDS OF A FEATHER!*

IF METRON GOT IT HERE --HE CAN RETURN IT TO *EARTH*--HOPEFULLY WITH *US* INSIDE!

IT'S BRAINIAC'S SHIP!

WHADDAYA MEAN BY *THAT* REMARK, METRON? JUST 'CAUSE WE'RE *CROOKS* DOESN'T MEAN WE'RE *ALL* BAD! LET ME REMIND YOU OF THE CONTRIBUTION US "*BIRDS*" MADE EARLIER IN EARTH'S CAUSE--

DULY NOTED, SIR-- BUT WE CAN'T DISCOUNT A *MORE SELFISH* MOTIVE. AFTER ALL, YOUR *OWN* FUTURE DEALINGS DEPEND ON THE BASIC *GULLIBILITY* OF A *FREE* PLANET!

BAH! MY MOTIVES, I ASSURE YOU, WERE PURELY *ALTRUISTIC!*

BE THAT AS IT MAY, VILLAINS OF EARTH-- RETURN NOW TO YOUR HOME--

--AND ETERNALLY *FORGET* WHAT YOU HAVE HELPED TO ACCOMPLISH THIS DAY!

22

CONCLUDED ON 2ND PAGE FOLLOWING

MEANWHILE...

GUEST MEANWHILE

THE F.M.M. AND THE NEW DC
or
Oh! Say Can DC?
Yes, they certainly can!

I am a member of one of the fastest-growing special-interest groups in the world. Although we are legion (honorary, anyway), and our members are everywhere, you have probably never heard of us. We do not lobby in Congress; we do not march in the streets. We do not even hold organized meetings (or unorganized ones, either). Still, whether you know it or not, many of your friends and acquaintances belong to our organization. If you are lucky, you might, too. We are the F.M.M.—the Former Marvelite Maximuses. We believe that for the first time in twenty years, DC comics are the most exciting, most original, most entertaining comics to be found anywhere. Following is a short history of the F.M.M., and the quest that brought us into being.

We used to live in a hotel called the House of Ideas, which, while not exactly dilapidated, had certainly seen better days. We moved out when O. Riginality, the guy who built the place, disappeared under unexplained circumstances. Some of the tenants whispered that he had died several years ago of neglect. Some other tenants insisted that that was nonsense, and that the old guy was still alive and well. However, the only evidence of Mr. Riginality's continued existence that they could turn up turned out to be rehashes and reprints. We missed our old friend a great deal, and wanted to go look for him, but some of us were reluctant to leave the old House of Ideas, our home ever since we had emigrated to the wonderful and mysterious, sometimes frightening, world of Four Colors. However, when the management began serving us mutants at every meal (and nothing but leftovers and little mutant mini-series for between-meal snacks), we realized that our loyalty was misplaced. We packed our polyethylene bags, said "excelsior" to friends who were too complacent to join us, and went on a quest for O. Riginality.

There followed a long and tedious journey through the Saddle Stitched Desert. The place was certainly more populous than it had been the last time we saw it. There were hundreds of four-color houses, and across the tracks, several black-and-white ones. Our hopes were high that O. Riginality would be around there somewhere. But, after knocking on every single door, and even going inside and searching several of the dwellings, we found nothing to suggest that our missing friend had been anywhere near that desert. We were beginning to despair of ever seeing him again.

Then one day, as we were nearing the edge of the desert, we spotted a man in blue, with what seemed to be horns atop his head, carrying a trident.

"Beware," one of the travelers whispered, "we may be nearing the Devilish Competition." The Devilish Competition! We had been warned to stay away from them by the staff and management of the House of Ideas. Some of our group were frightened and ready to turn back, but the rest of us had noticed a gleam in the Blue Devil's eyes, a gleam that could only have been put there by our old friend. We called it the spark of O. Riginality. Barely able to contain our excitement, we followed his hoofprints.

Before long, we saw it—a great, beautiful, four-color castle standing alone. Some of the F.M.M.s said it was the Emerald City, some said Amethyst. None of us stopped to argue about it, we all ran inside. The run left us winded, but the wondrousness of the inside of the castle completely took our breath away. The first thing we noticed was the whiteness of the walls; they were the whitest we had ever seen anywhere. And on those walls, you wouldn't believe it, the kind of pictures Michelangelo painted in his dreams. The artists' signatures—Colan, Kane, Kubert, and Carmine Infantino, Pérez and Garcia-Lopez—read like a roll call of the legends. We just stood there, flabbergasted. Why, we must be in El Dorado Jr., the legendary second golden age.

Boom!

A chain of dynamite brand-new concepts went off nearby. We could hardly believe our ears. We hadn't heard that joyful sound in years. We did not have much time to sit and listen to it, though. Just then, a stampede of wild, exciting plots, and small but intense subplots, came barreling through the street. We had to scramble to keep from being completely bowled over.

"Hey, this El Dorado Jr. place looks like it might be dangerous," somebody said as we brushed ourselves off.

"Oh, I think we'll be safe enough," somebody else said. We looked around and saw several colorful and heroic-looking men and women patrolling the streets, skies, and waterways. "It would seem that there are Titans in these days."

We soon noticed that it wasn't just Titans, but many, many other heroes as well. Each one was completely individual and looked as though it had fascinating stories to tell. The handiwork of our old friend was obvious. Even the older characters had gotten a face-lift, and looked so young and fresh we hardly recognized them.

"O. Riginality is around here, that's for sure." We reluctantly tore ourselves away from the marvelous artwork and the captivating characters and went to look for him. We had to watch our step crossing the streets, because there were no red lights or stop signs, or even yield signs.

"I guess there's no stopping them now," we told ourselves.

As we walked along, we came across several familiar faces, people we hadn't seen in years. We asked them where Mr. Riginality was. They led us to the top of a tall mountain called Exclamation Point. Our old friend was up there, busier than we'd ever seen him. We were extremely glad to see him. He told us that he was the founder and president of the community we had thought was El Dorado Jr., but he called it the new DC. There were hundreds of pretty laurels around his office, but you could tell that none of them had been rested on. He held our attention for hours as he told us of his plans for the future. We told him how wonderful it all sounded, and asked him if we could stay with him there at the new DC.

"Sure," O. Riginality said, smiling, "glad to have you. In fact, I'll show you to your rooms right now. You must be tired from your journey. Besides, it's getting late."

"What time is it?" we asked.

"Why, it's the DC age," he said with a wink, "nuff said?"

Robert Loy
175 Braly Dr.
Summerville, SC 29483

WITH THE VILLAINS SAFELY ABOARD, BRAINIAC'S SHIP STREAKS ACROSS THE INTER-DIMENSIONAL GALAXIES ON A COURSE TO EARTH--

--LEAVING THE HEROES BEHIND TO PONDER THE HUMOROUS ASPECTS OF THEIR UNUSUAL ALLIANCE!

HA! WHAT POMPOUS PHONIES!

COME NOW-- THEY WERE GENUINE HEROES TODAY!

THE FUNNY THING IS-- THEY'LL NEVER REMEMBER IT!

GOOD THING TOO-- IF THEY THOUGHT THEY'D ACTUALLY SAVED EARTH, THEY'D PROBABLY KILL THEMSELVES!

METRON! WE SHOULD BE LEAVING TOO-- WHAT ARE YOUR PLANS FOR US?

MAYBE WE CAN RENT A BOOM TUBE-- AND SEND IT BACK WHEN WE'RE HOME!

YOUR LEVITY ARISES FROM A SENSE OF RELIEF-- BUT KNOW THAT THERE IS LITTLE MIRTH IN WHAT WE HAVE DONE HERE!

STAY ALERT! BE EVER VIGILANT AND READY FOR DARKSEID!

DARKSEID CANNOT TAKE DEFEAT!!!

METRON--WAIT! HOW DO WE GET HO---

GREAT HERA! WE ARE HOME!

THUS, THE BATTLE IS OVER--BUT THE WAR WILL NEVER END--FOR NOW, AND ALL ETERNITY-- BEWARE OF DARKSEID!

SUPER POWERS™

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New York, NY 10103

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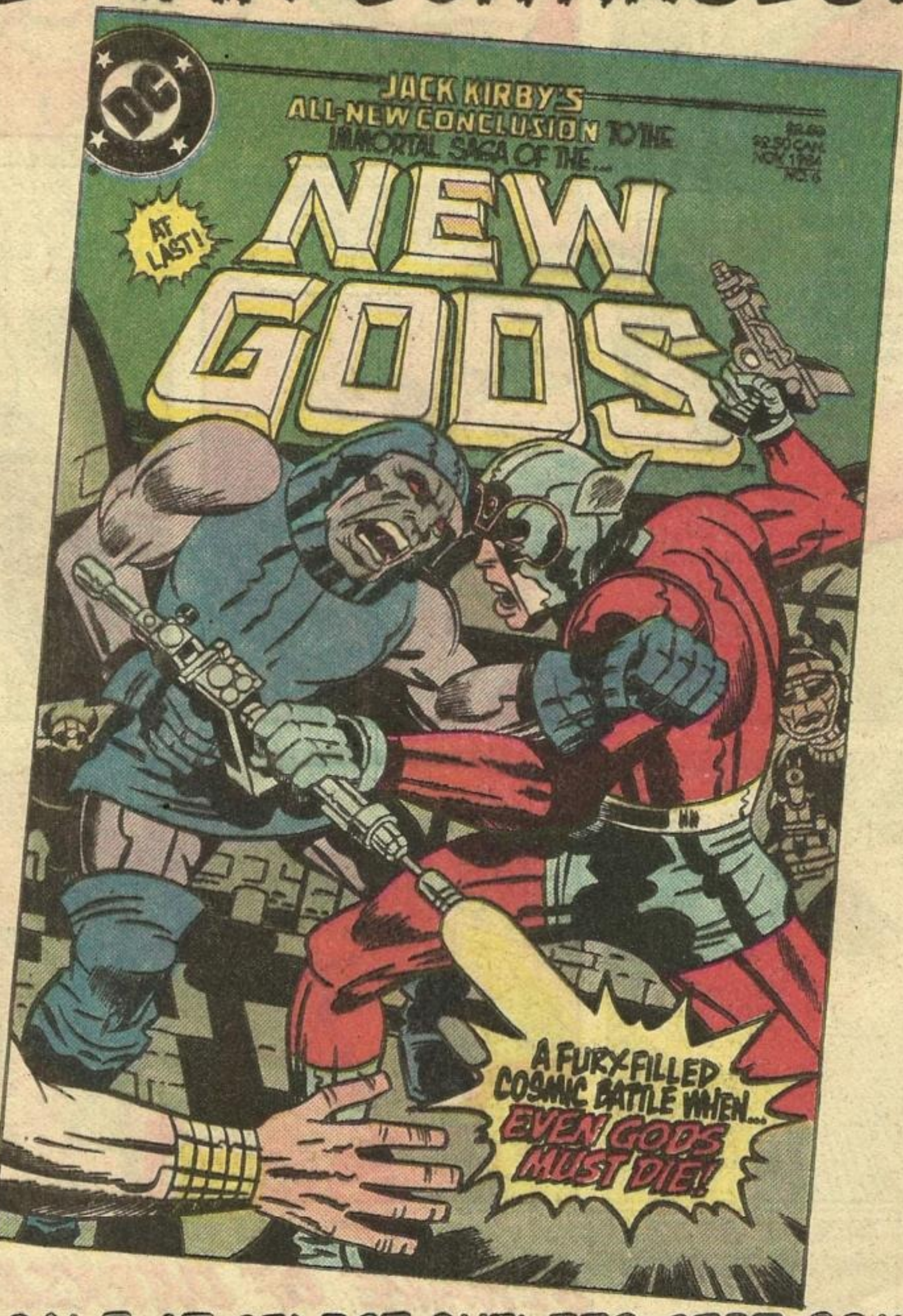
THE WAR CONTINUES...



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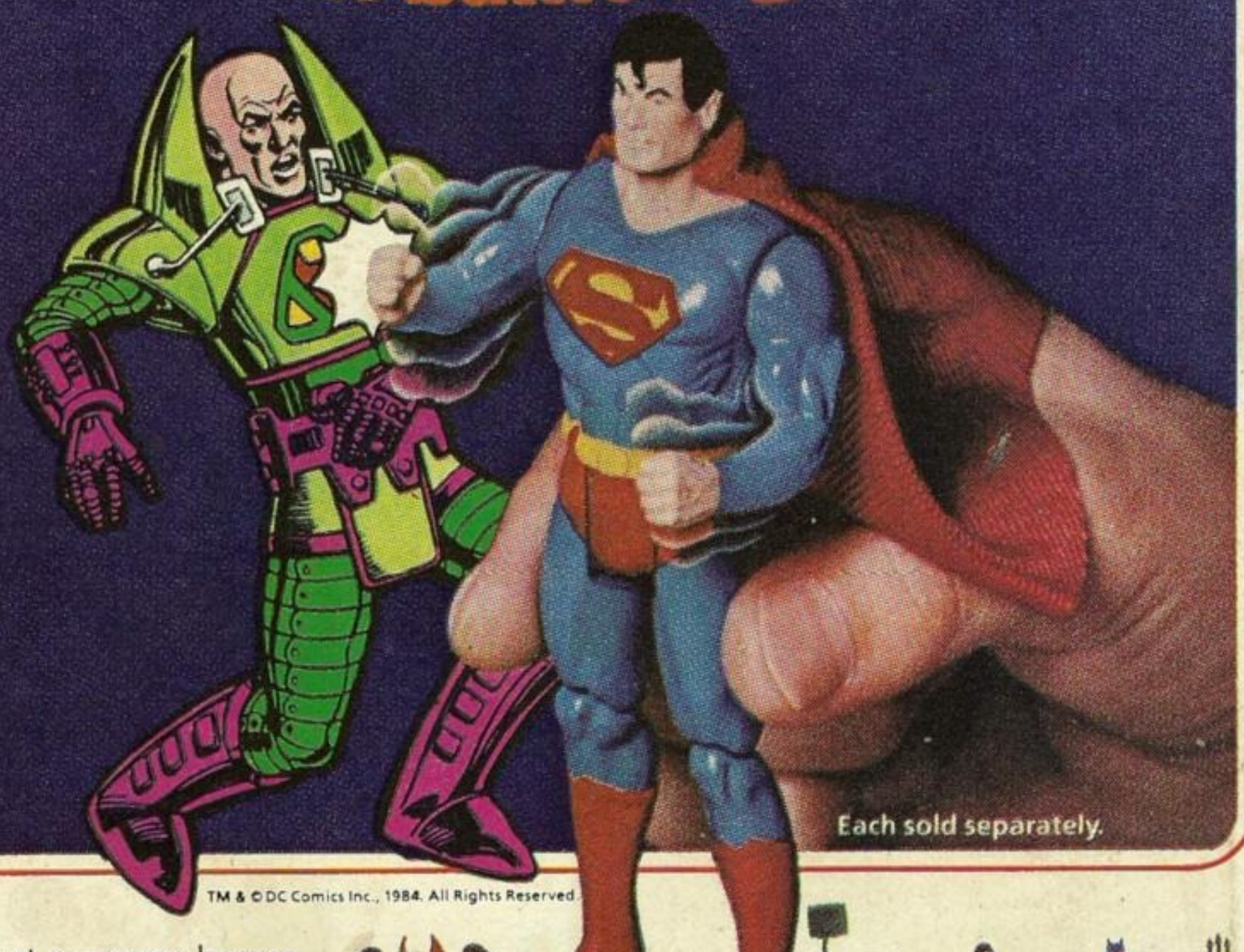

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